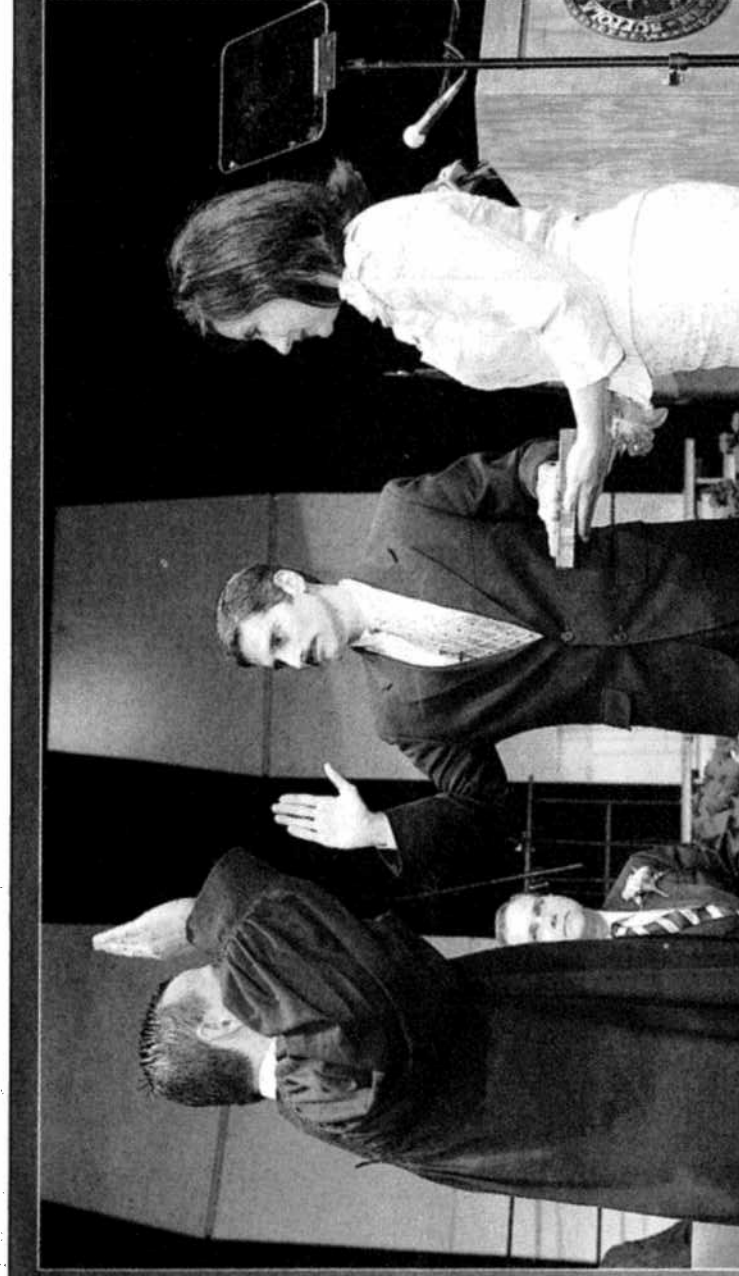


# His Eye's on Future



With wife Marie holding the Bible, Steve Levy is sworn in as Suffolk County executive by Judge William Rebolini yesterday.

Newsday Photo / Daniel Goodrich

## Levy promises streamlining, focus on ethics

By J. Jioni Palmer  
STAFF WRITER

Promising to boldly streamline county government by slashing patronage and controlling spending, Steve Levy was sworn in yesterday as Suffolk's seventh county executive.

In a 30-minute speech, Levy laid out his vision of the future for the 1.4 million residents of Suffolk — a place he said has a strong economy that draws strength from its diversity.

"That is what I want," Levy said during his address at the Selden campus of Suffolk County Community College. "An Island that is still defined by its communities. An Island that provides not just jobs, but careers with stability, hope and advancement. . . . An Island that assures that people named Diaz, Chen, Patel and Ali can live in the same fine neighborhoods as citizens named Smith and Jones."

But Levy's idealism was tempered by the realities of the county's finances, including an estimated \$240 million budget hole.

"If we sit on our hands, 2005 will mean large tax increases and draconian cuts to services," he said. "But mark my words, we will not sit back."

Levy promised to be an activist executive who expects "to make some enemies" as he seeks to remake Suffolk County. He said that beginning today, county employees would be required to report any outside businesses they are involved in, to ferret out potential conflicts of interest. He said he also intends to ask the county legislature to approve the appointment of a director of ethics.

Additionally, Levy said he'll seek lawmakers' support for a six-month appointment of former federal prosecutor Laura Brevetti as a sort of special investigator to "weed through various departments." Brevetti was retained by the county legislature in 1995 to vet a plan by former County Executive Robert Gaffney to lease cars instead of buying them. That plan was ultimately scrapped.

Levy's speech before elected officials, union and civic leaders and his family drew praise from all corners of the political spectrum.

"He's asking for sacrifice and he's the first to step up to the plate," said Suffolk Democratic Chairman Richard Schaffer. "That's the mark of a true leader."

Legis. Joseph Caracappa, a Republican from Selden who is expected to be selected presiding officer today, said Levy hit all the right notes.

"He touched on all areas of concern," Caracappa said. However, he said, accomplishing everything promises not to be easy.

"Steve will learn that the legislature and the ex-county executive have done our best already to streamline government," he said. "His biggest problem will be with the state mandates placed on our backs."

## Suffolk County Executive

### STEVE LEVY

And

### Supreme Court Judge

### WILLIAM REBOLINI

Former associates of

## THE SARISOHN LAW FIRM

